

Joint Statement by President Biden and President Yoon Suk Yeol of South Korea on the Identification of the Remains of Korean War Medal of Honor Recipient Luther H. Story

April 26, 2023

The United States of America and Republic of Korea are honored to announce that Army Corporal Luther H. Story, of Buena Vista, Georgia, killed during the Korean War and missing for 73 years, has been accounted for.

In late August 1950, U.S. forces in Korea were primarily located along the Pusan Perimeter, a defensive formation around the towns of Pusan and Yeongsan, South Korea, along the eastern shore of the Nakdong River. On August 31, members of A and B Companies of the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division took the brunt of large-scale attack by the North Korean People's Army. A member of A Company, Corporal Story displayed conspicuous bravery during intense combat on September 1.

Corporal Story was awarded the nation's highest award for his heroic actions that day. Within his Medal of Honor Citation are statements of his gallantry: "he fearlessly stood in the middle of the road, throwing grenades into the truck. Out of grenades, he crawled to his squad, gathered up additional grenades, and again attacked the vehicle . . . During the withdrawal the company was attacked by such superior numbers that it was forced to deploy in a rice field . . . [he] was wounded in this action, but, disregarding his wounds, rallied the men about him and repelled the attack. Realizing that his wounds would hamper his comrades, he refused to retire to the next position but remained to cover the company's withdrawal. When last seen he was firing every weapon available and fighting off another hostile assault."

In the weeks and months following the September 1 battle, Corporal Story's remains could not be located or identified nor was he recorded as being taken prisoner. On January 16, 1956, after he could not be associated with any of the remains exchanged by both sides during Operation GLORY in 1954, Corporal Story was declared unrecoverable.

In June 2021, as part of the plan to disinter 652 Korean War Unknowns from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP), the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) inspected Unknown X-260 Tanggok, a set of remains recovered near Sangde-po, South Korea. Scientists from the DPAA used dental and anthropological analyses while scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial DNA analysis to identify these remains as Corporal Story.

General of the Army Omar Bradley presented Corporal Story's father the Medal of Honor in a ceremony at the Pentagon on June 21, 1951. He is survived by his niece, Mrs. Judy Wade of Americus, Georgia, whose mother was his younger sister.

The supreme sacrifice and heroism of Corporal Luther Story is illustrative of the freedom, security, and prosperity the South Korean people have today.

Both countries will continue making every effort to identify service members missing in action like Army Corporal Story. On this 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice and the U.S.-ROK alliance, our two countries take this joint statement as an opportunity to reaffirm our respect and gratitude for the courageous acts of our service members in defense of our freedom, values and democracy.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Categories: Joint Statements : South Korea, President Yoon.

Names: Story, Luther H.; Wade, Judy; Yoon Suk Yeol.

Subjects: Medal of Honor; POW/MIA, identification and return of remains to U.S.; South Korea, President; South Korea, relations with U.S.; U.S. servicemembers, service and dedication.

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